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AUTHOR	Stinson, R.
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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this project was to increase the information available about operational procedures of parent education programs in California's Tulare County rural high schools. Specifically, the information gathered was to be used in developing communications with parents and the public about present and future vocational education programs. A questionnaire was sent to principals in the county to determine what types of parent education contacts were used. Results revealed that parent-teacher organizations seemed to be continuously rated highest. Appendices include a copy of the questionnaire, results of an ethnic survey, a listing of the high schools and principals, and a 1970 county unemployment graph. (AN)

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TITLE OF PROJECT

SUCCESSFUL PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS AT THE HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL IN A RURAL COUNTY

Area Surveyed was Tulare County

by

R, Stinson,
Director
Tulare County Organization
for Vocational Education

July 15, 1970

RC004654

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Purpose and Needs

The pressing reason and long range goal for this project was to increase the information available about the operational procedures of parent education programs in Tulare County's rural high schools. This information will be used to develop a meaningful and useage media for communicating with parents and public about present and future vocational education programs in this county. The developing for this information would be sponsored by the Tulare County Organization for Vocational Education.

In attempting to use reference materials, two major problems constantly appeared. The first problem is the limited and lack of detailed current information on successful rural average high school parent education programs. Not to be confusing, I am referring to the average or typical high school located in an agrarian rural setting with limited assessed valuation taxing powers. The second problem appears in what I would call"reading between the lines" about expectations of successful rural parent education programs. The general reference statement wishes you success in one breath and in the same breath states there is little hope for any great change for rural communities traditional attitudes about their high school through parent education.

Therefore, it is the purpose for this project to take a fresh and unbiased look at parent education as it relates to Tulare County through an evaluation and recommendation survey directed to high school principals about their school's parent education programs. The results of this project will provide T.C.O.V.E. organization with information on developing the best type of propaganda media to be used in its rural high school's parent education program.

Solution to Project

In the attempt to procure valid and relevant up to date information on local high school parent education programs in Tulare County during non-operational school time (Summer, 1970), it was felt that a questionnaire would save time and reach the respective principals as quickly as personal contact or telephone calls. The replies to the questionnaire were the greatest concern as many principals were on vacation and not in a position to handle correspondence.

Procedure

The questionnaire was considered very carefully as to details, length, content and ease of completion. As pointed out in the "solution", the major concern was the need for an early reply so that valid conclusions could be drawn from the questionnaires returned.

The questionnaire was so designed as to provide information about each high school's parent education program. The questionnaire divided parent education into its expected and/or intended outcomes as related to parents and the institutional structure of the school system. The following divisions were made in parent education within the high school:

1. Administration Programs - relating to school's administration and parents.
2. Counseling Programs - relating to school's counseling-guidance and parents.
3. Instruction Programs - relating to school's instruction and parents.
4. Other Programs - relating to extra curricular activities and parents.

The divisions were divided into parent education activities and programs. Each principal was asked to rate the effectiveness and the number of times this activity was conducted during the year. (See Appendix for copy of questionnaire). There was also a place provided for any unique activities and any overall comments the principal wished to make about any activities, divisions, or overall questionnaire.

Analysis

At the present time 50% of the questionnaires have been returned with an adequate statistical cross-section for analysis purposes. It is anticipated that the remaining questionnaires returned after the report is written will be used to check against the validity of this report.

It appears that the questionnaire's sub-divisions relating to parent and school structure in parent education programs proved most adequate to the principals answering the questions.

The following results are shown below. Because of the confidential nature of this report, schools names are not used.

Results of Questionnaire to High School Principals about Parent Education

Rating: 3 - Excellent
2 - Good or Average
1 - Poor
OK - Positive rating without degree value

Schools	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I. Administration							
P.T.A.	3	3	OK	3	-	2	2
School Board Meeting	1	2	OK	OK			
Disciplinary Conference	2	-	-	2	OK	?	
News Releases	0	?	OK	3	2	3	
Service Clubs	2	3	OK	3		3	
Lay Advisory Committee			OK	2			
II. Counseling Program							
PTA	3	3	OK	3		3	3
Home Visit	3	-	OK	3+		2	2
Career Day	-	2	OK	-		3	
Parent Conference	1	-	OK	-			2
News Releases	1	3	OK	3			

Schools	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
III. Instruction Program							
P.T.A.	3	3	OK	3		3	3
Back to School	3+	1	-	1		3	
Open House	3+	1	OK	3		3	
Home Visitation	3	-	OK	-			2
Parent Visitation	2	-	OK	?			
School Week	1	3	OK	-			
School Publication	1	3	OK	?	2	2	2
School Report	?	-	OK	-			
ESEA Meeting (Parent)		3					
IV. Other							
Awards Night	1	3	OK	3			3
Sport Programs	1	3	OK	3			3
Rooters Club Meeting	-	-	-	-			
FFA Banquet		3	OK				
Academic Awards			OK				

In the analysis of the above replies to this questinnaire, a very obvious factor is most evident. It appeared in most reference materials and was referred to under "Purpose and Need" of this report. Traditional attitudes in rural communities definitely affect the parent education programs of the high schools. New innovative parent education programs appear to "wither on the vine" for less exciting and traditional parent education programs. In all cases, parent-teacher organizations or parent clubs, seem to be continuously rated highest for parent education activities in all divisions.

The second highest rated activity varies in each division. In administration programs it appears to be service club contacts. In many rural communities of this county the service club is the only organized body other than the city government, therefore this trend appears to be normal for school administration contacts with parent education programs. In the division of counseling programs, the second highest rated parent education activity is home visitation. This activity rating leaves the "door open" to many assumptions, but keeping in mind that this county's rural population is somewhat dispersed, limited in income and made up of a large population of Mexican-American descent (26%), this may be a necessity of the school to provide adequate counseling service and the parent education in the counseling division becomes a secondary objective.

The second highest rated parent education programs for instructional programs appears to be school publication. This rating left some question as to effectiveness of other parent education activity programs such as the high school "open house" or "back to school" programs. Due to the rural community communication,it is felt that this form of parent education media or activity may be the only contact some parents have with their local high school and its programs, outside of their child's observations and comments about his school day at high school.

Other Programs division was added to parent education questionnaire as sort of a "catch-all" for such school activities as extra curricular programs, school clubs, etc.. Due to the high community interest in rural high school athletics and programs relating to school sports, it was very obvious that this division would be the highest and second to highest rated so far as parent education programs.

This analysis led to some clear conclusions on parent education in this rural community.

Conclusions

To best meet the general needs of parent education in the high schools of this county, it is extremely important that parent clubs and organizations accept the important role that they must take in parent education programs. Through joint county-wide planning and meaningful assistance to parents and school, the parent organizations and clubs of this county can mold and augment meaningful parent support and provide assistance to their respective high schools. It is difficult to elaborate on the gigantic importance that combined efforts of parent organizations can play in this county's parent education programs.

The second highest rated activities should not be shadowed in their importance to parent education programs. Even though traditional parent education programs are standard for this rural county, it should be recognized that these programs are successful communication means in rural communities. Each activity means a successful communication tool to school's parent education program.

Even though this project is directed to a three million, one hundred twenty-two thousand, three hundred and twenty (3,122,320) square mile rural agrarian county in California with thirteen (13) high schools, there should be a constant reminder that each community, no matter how small, has its own unique situations, personality and problems which cannot be explored in a project covering this amount of area. In the attempt to extract information on parent education in each high school of this county, it should be kept in mind that each high school is only a micro-cosmos of the communities it is serving.

Implementation

The results of this project will provide the guidelines for developing a meaningful media to reach parents (through parent education programs) about the possibilities of their child receiving meaningful employable skill training and counseling while attending their county high schools.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

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APPENDIX A

Tulare County Organization For Vocational Education

DIRECTOR—R. JACK STINSON

202 County Civic Center
VISALIA, CALIFORNIA 93277
Phone: (209)
732-5511 Ext. 220

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Tulare County Dept. of Education

June 29, 1970

T.C.O.V.E. is preparing to swing into operation with its public information program. To accomplish this phase, we would like to provide information (printed, audio-visual etc.,) that could be made available in your parent education programs and contacts. To best meet your parent education contact needs and tell our story about your school and T.C.O.V.E., we would need to know what methods your school uses in parent education contacts, any special times of the year you feel advisable and your opinion on how effective this contact is with parents. Listed below are some areas:

SUGGESTED AREAS OF PARENT EDUCATION WITH YOUR SCHOOL

Administrative Programs	Time of Year	Effectiveness
1. PTA (Parent Clubs)		
2. School Board Meetings		
3. Discipline Conferences		
4. News Releases		
5. Service Club Contacts		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

Counseling Programs	Time of Year	Effectiveness
1. PTA (Parent Clubs)		
2. Home Visits		
3. Career Day		
4. Parent Conferences		
5. News Releases		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
Instructional Programs		
1. PTA (Parent Clubs)		
2. Back to School		
3. Open House		
4. Home Visitation		
5. Parent Visitation		
6. School Week		
7. School Publication		
8. School Report		
9.		
10.		
Other Programs		
1. Awards Night		
2. Sports Programs		
3. Rooter Club Meetings		
4.		
5.		

APPENDIX B

MAX RAFFERTY
Superintendent of Public Instruction
and Director of Education

Everett T. Calvert
Deputy Superintendent
of Public Instruction

Eugene Gonzales
Associate Superintendent
of Public Instruction

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Division of School Administration and Finance

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Division of Compensatory Education

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Associate Superintendent; Chief,
Division of Special Education

J. William May
Acting Chief,
Division of Instruction

Collier McDermon
Assistant Superintendent
(807 State Bldg.
Los Angeles 90012)

June 15, 1970

Dr. Max Cochran, Superintendent
Tulare County Schools
202 County Civic Center
Visalia, California 93277

Dear Dr. Cochran:

Results of the racial and ethnic survey of California public schools, fall, 1969, have been processed and the summary data is available at this office.

Enclosed for your information and files are the data for each district and school in your county.

The totals for Tulare County are as follows:

TOTAL STUDENTS	TOTAL MINORITY	TOTAL OTHER	SPANISH SURNAME	NEGRO	ORIENTAL	AMERICAN INDIAN
50,251	17,355	32,896	15,637	995	448	275
	34.5%	65.5%	31.1%	2.0%	.9%	.5%

Sincerely,

Frederic R. Gunsky/oh

Frederic R. Gunsky, Consultant
Bureau of Intergroup Relations

FRG:oh
Enclosures

APPENDIX C

HIGH SCHOOLS AND PRINCIPALS

Porterville High School	Mr. Robert Shaner
Monache High School	Mr. E.R. Berryhill
Strathmore Union High School	Mr. Jim Brinkman
Dinuba Joint Union High School	Mr. Clinton Cates
Exeter Union High School	Mr. Robert G. Heath
Mt. Whitney High School	Mr. Gerald Jolley
Redwood High School	Mr. Reinold Peterson
Tulare Western High School	Mr. Glen G. Lewis
Tulare Union High School	Mr. William Ny
Woodlake Union High School	Mr. E.B. Loverin
Lindsay High School	Mr. William E. Meese
Alpaugh Unified High School	Mr. William W. Nolen
Orosi High School	Mr. Jack Mann

APPENDIX D

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR TULARE COUNTY